

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF
CITY OF ALAMEDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2009
7:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Bonta called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Chair Bonta. Commission Members: Breuer, Dahlberg, Harrison (arrived at 7:55 p.m.) Lindsey, McKean, Reeves, Ryan, and Viehweg

Absent: Commission Members: None

Staff: Eric Fonstein and Rosemary Valeska
Economic Development Director Leslie Little

MINUTES

2.a. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 15, 2009

Motion (Reeves), seconded, and unanimous (with abstention by Viehweg) to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 15, 2009 as submitted.

CONSENT CALENDAR

(None)

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC

(None)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(None)

NEW BUSINESS

6.a. Presentation regarding proposed project at the former Cavanaugh Motors site

Barbara Price was in attendance to represent the project on behalf of the developer. Copies of her PowerPoint presentation were distributed. The working name for this project is Park Vista Plaza. The current plan is for two "Marketplace-inspired," destination-retail tenants and one restaurant. Parking would be provided on Buena Vista Avenue where an old house currently stands. There is also an opportunity for shared parking on the

adjoining lot that is currently used for Marketplace parking. Commission Member McKean asked about the proposed restaurant. Ms. Price responded that she would like to see something comparable to Ching Hua in quality. Commission Member Reeves asked if any problems were anticipated in the next few months and how the EDC could help. Ms. Price responded that Planning had been exceptional during the entitlement process and Economic Development helped with the utility undergrounding now underway. The next step will be the building permits. It is important to have the EDC's support. The developer has been responsive to staff's requests and hopes that process will continue. Ms. Price noted that there is more leasing interest in Alameda by specialty stores now that they better understand our demographics. This project represents the beginning of the "North of Lincoln" movement. Commission Member Breuer stated that this project would be a great addition to Park Street. The Chair thanked Ms. Price for her presentation. This item was provided for information, only; no EDC action was requested.

6.b. Presentation regarding Green Corridor Partnership and Innovation HUB designation

Copies of Mr. Fonstein's PowerPoint presentation regarding the East Bay Green Corridor were distributed. Mr. Fonstein stated that the City had written letters supporting Federal stimulus funds for Aurora Biofuels and Primus Power. The Chair asked if I-HUB could qualify for State and Federal Funding. Mr. Fonstein replied that it could through the U.S. Department of Energy. The Bank of Alameda has signed a letter of support for our I-HUB application. Commission Member Dahlberg asked what would be the evidence of progress over the next five years. Mr. Fonstein responded that business starting out at incubators at U.C. Berkeley can result in businesses at business parks like Harbor Bay. Ms. Little stated that the State I-HUB steering committee determines which regions of the state are aligned for green technology. These kinds of partnerships become an opportunity to take green policies and turn them into practical and tangible things, and show that region is on board with the same kinds of policies. Ms. Little added that the California Redevelopment Association believes that this is how business will be done from now on. Commission Member Viehweg requested clarification on that point. Ms. Little responded that communities are now being rated on how they address green/carbon footprint issues. Commission Member Viehweg asked how much funding comes from private capital, or is it all Federal dollars. Ms. Little responded that business are funded with private capital unique to the Bay Area or Silicon Valley. When these business get some results and achieve profitability, they become attractive for other funding opportunities like Federal funding. Biofuels is an example of this. The Federal government is looking for the equivalent of "shovel ready." Commission Member Dahlberg asked how do we reach out to these companies. Ms. Little responded that these companies often find each

other; we reach out to tell them our value; we talk to existing companies; and we can use the I-HUB network to reach out, so we don't have to reinvent the wheel. Commission Member Harrison asked when we will see the ceiling to this, e.g., the "Silicon Island" boom and bust. Ms. Little responded that there are so many discrete niches to this technology and the applications of it, there is little chance of duplication. It does not seem like there is any ceiling. We are also seeing a different pattern of investment than in the "dot com" era. Mr. Fonstein noted that British Petroleum made a huge investment in biofuels research at U.C. Berkeley, which ultimately evolved into the Joint Bio-Energy Institute (JBEI). Commission Member Harrison asked if these businesses could use existing space. Ms. Little responded yes, and these businesses like adaptive re-use. The Chair stated that he like to see the City working on a regional basis and thanked staff for the presentation. This item was provided for information, only; no EDC action was requested.

6.c. Recommendation to cancel the EDC's December 17, 2009 Regular Meeting

Motion (Dahlberg), seconded, and unanimous to cancel the December 17, 2009 Regular Meeting.

REPORTS

(None)

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

8.a. Upcoming EDC Agenda Items

8.b. Redevelopment Magazine

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF

Mr. Fonstein reported the following:

- A Commission Member had inquired to staff regarding the possibility of changing the starting time of the EDC's regular meetings from 7:30 p.m. to an earlier time. The Chair noted that several of Alameda's boards and commissions have a 7:00 p.m. starting time. The Chair polled each member and the consensus was that it would be appropriate to place the proposal for a 7:00 p.m. starting time on the agenda for the EDC's consideration at the next regular meeting. Mr. Fonstein noted that we were still awaiting confirmation from Public Works that they could provide cablecasting with the earlier start time.
- New Webster Street businesses were announced:
 - The owners of Lanvie will be opening an Asian food market at the former KFC site.

- Neldam's is moving out of Oakland and will be opening a retail bakery at the former Urban Forest site.
- The Union 76 station at Webster and Buena Vista now has a new franchisee and will be re-opening by the end of the week.

Commission Members' questions/comments:

- The Chair reminded the EDC members of Leslie Little's memo to them regarding the SunCal initiative, and that there was a limit to what the EDC could do. Ms. Little stated that the SunCal initiative had been officially placed on ballot for the February 2, 2010 special election. A joint meeting of the City Council and Alameda Unified School District will be scheduled in early January for the purpose of providing public information regarding the City's election report.
- Commission Member McKean commented on a recent news story regarding Oakland Chinatown filing a lawsuit to bar the election on SunCal's initiative due to lack of an EIR. Ms. Little responded that the election could not be stopped now, and that this was actually a public records request. She also noted that an EIR would be done as part of the Disposition and Development Agreement process.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Valeska
EDC Recording Secretary

RV